

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 L-03 SP-02 AID-05 NSC-05 CIEP-01

TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-04 OMB-01 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00

FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04

SIL-01 FEAE-00 IGA-01 H-02 /080 W

----- 102655

R 120910Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7789

C O N F I D E N T I A L COTONOU 1708

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: EINV, DM

SUBJ: EXPROPRIATED US PROPERTY AND ELIGIBILITY FOR GSP

REF A. STATE 265152 B. COTONOU 1639 C. STATE 241349

D. STATE 225826 E. COTONOU 984

1. LUCKILY REF A ARRIVED JUST BEFORE ONE OF MY RARE APPOINTMENTS WITH FORNMIN ALLADAYE ON NOV 10. I ADDED THE SUBJECT TO MY AGENDA, MADE DETAILED EXPLANATION OF IMPLICATIONS OF SEC 502(B)(4)(II) OF TRADE ACT OF 1974 FOR DAHOMEY, AND INFORMED HIM AGAIN THAT EMBASSY COULD FIND NO EVIDENCE THAT ANY PROGRESS HAD EVER BEEN MADE IN EXAMINING TEXACO AND MOBIL CLAIMS. IN FACT, IT APPEARED THAT COMMISSION SET UP TO WORK ON THIS MATTER HAD BEEN MORIBUND LAST SIX MONTHS AND ITS STAFF DISPERSED TO OTHER GOVT ACTIVITIES.

2. WHEN ALLADAYE HEARD POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS OF FAILURE TO ISSUE COMPENSATION COMMISSION'S FINDINGS BY DEC OR, ALTERNATIVELY, TO DEMONSTRATE THAT SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS WITH OIL COMPANIES WERE WELL UNDER WAY (MERE CONTACT WITH THEM WOULD BE CONSIDERED INADEQUATE), HE RUSHED TO TELEPHONE, PRESUMABLY TO GET MIN OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE. HE COULD NOT GET THROUGH, BUT HE SAID ACTION WOULD BE TAKEN IMMEDIATELY TO GET THE COMM-
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SSION'S WORK MOVING. USG COULD REST ASSURED THAT DAHOMEY WOULD

QUALIFY FOR PASSING MARKS BY DEC.

3. ALLADAYE DECLARED THAT USG WAS THE ONLY GOVT CURRENTLY PRESSING DAHOMEY TO INDEMNIFY FOR TAKEOVERS (PETROLEUM COMPANIES, BANKS, ETC.)

4. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH MY STAFF AND I HAVE MADE STRENUOUS EFFORTS TO GET DAHOMEAN GOVT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT INDEMNIFICATION OF FIRMS WHOSE ASSETS IN DAHOMEY WERE SEIZED LAST DEC AND THIS JUNE, THIS WAS THE FIRST OCCASION ON WHICH ANY DAHOMEAN OFFICIAL EVER DISPLAYED ANY SENSE OF URGENCY OR INDEED ANY INTEREST IN THE SUBJECT. WHEN I RAISED IT WITH PRES KEREKOU ON OCT 10, HE BRUSHED IT ASIDE, AND EXPRESSED ANNOYANCE.

5. I WAS CAREFUL NOT TO GIVE IMPRESSION WE WERE FORCING CONFRONTATION, AND STRESSED THEME THAT WE WERE TRYING TO KEEP DAHOMEY FROM GETTING INTO TROUBLE OVER AID, OR OTHERWISE DRAWING UNFAVORABLE ATTENTION. MY PRESENTATION WAS FRIENDLY AND SYMPATHETIC. END COMMENT.

6. WILL NOW SEEK ANOTHER APPOINTMENT WITH MIN OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE ATCHADE, TO SEE IF FORNMIN HAS ENERGIZED HIM TO GET THE COMPENSATION COMMISSION FOR THE OIL COMPANIES TO BEGIN WORK. WILL ALSO RUN A FRESH CHECK ON TACTICS BEING FOLLOWED BY GOVTS OF OTHER NATIONALIZED COMPANIES.

7. SUGGESTED ACTION: IF DEPT BELIEVES THAT AT THIS STAGE IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO INFORM MOBIL AND TEXACO OF FURTHER ACTION WE HAVE TAKEN TO GET SOMETHING MOVING, WE SUGGEST THAT THIS MESSAGE AND REF A BE REPEATED TO ABIDJAN FOR SUMMARY BRIEFING OF REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS THOSE TWO COMPANIES.
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